

Industry News

Fandom

Game Reviews

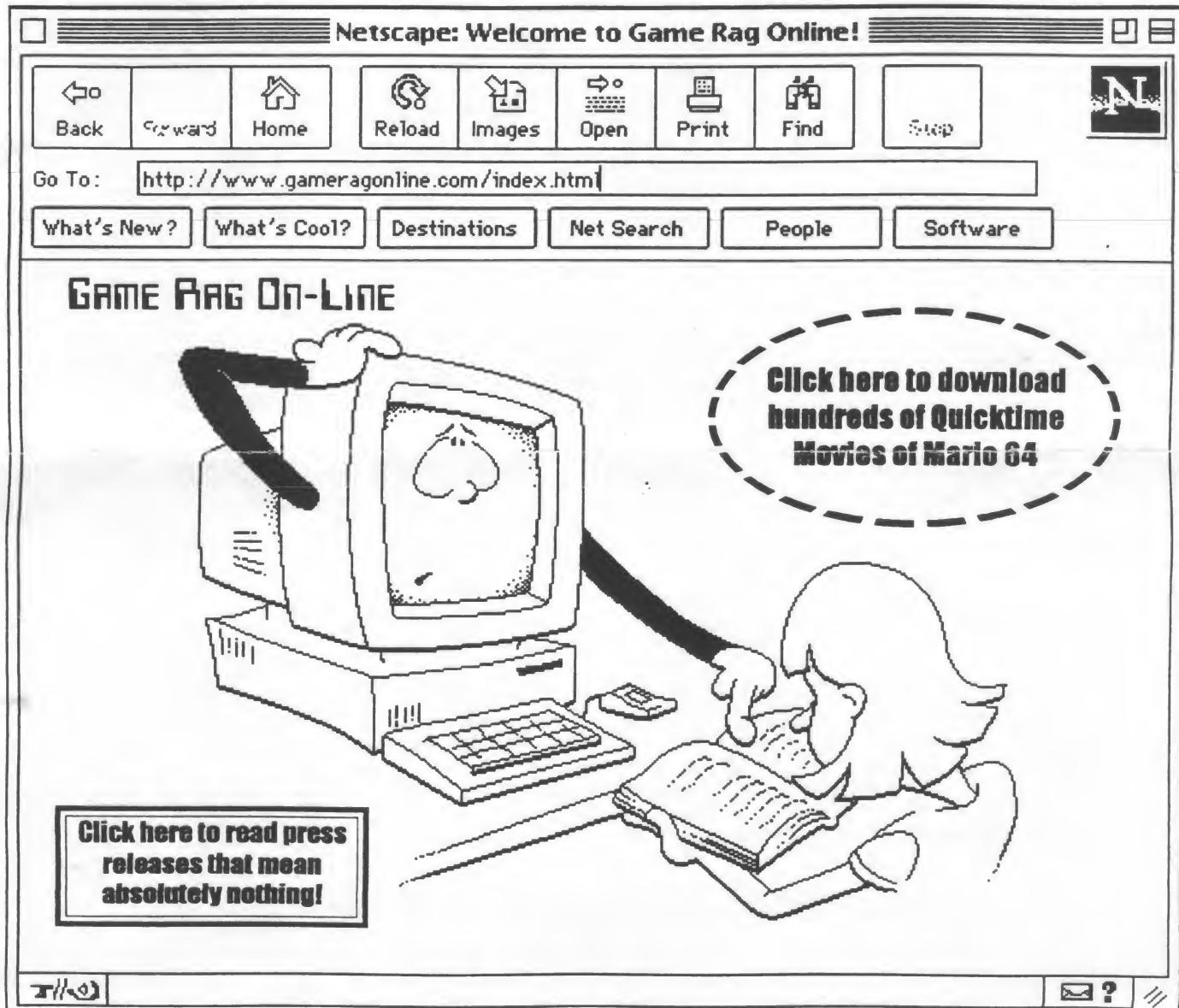
Editorials

# PARADOX

Issue 19

July/August 1996

Still \$1



## JN-LINE AND DANGEROUS

PLUS: Vortex Retro, NES of the '90s, Ground Control to Major Tom, and Fan Forum comes back

CHRIS'



THE EVOLUTION OF THE 'ZINE MOVES  
FORWARD ONCE  
AGAIN

welcome

Flipping through past issues of Paradox, it's easy to see how much we've changed. Every issue has its own "feel," its own character. This issue is no different. But somehow, this is also a major change. The last two issues of Paradox were produced by Jason, and had a much more serious, straightforward tone. The layout was also different, and didn't quite fit in with the classic style that the Apple IIGS and Graphic Writer III provided us with.

This issue, I wanted to get back to the look of our older issues, but with enough new style to create another niche for ourselves. It was a great experience to get back to doing both the layout, and a majority of the writing for this issue. Being involved firsthand in the production is a lot different than sending the other person articles via e-mail. I became energized, ready to jump head first into the issue. That I did, and I hope you'll enjoy the results and have some memories of what this 'zine was founded on. I was done with the basic form of this issue in a mere two weeks, and had started on it the weekend after #18 came out.

Another thing you'll notice is the abolition of our 'Head Staff' concept. Originally when we started the 'zine, it was a great idea. There are things that get in the way of that. So, Jason and I both agreed to slap the label of Editors on ourselves (not that we haven't been using that term for years anyway), and attempt to bring new people into the staff. Our first new staff member is Joe Ottoson, and he's contributed an article on Video Darwinism for this issue. This is an attempt to diversify the writing styles seen in each issue. My feeling on it is the more opinions we can pack into each issue, the better. We're still accepting contributions of articles for print from anyone who wants to write one, but adding regular writers will help us grow and remain opinion-strong.

My experience with the web page has been varied. At first, I thought that it would be possible for me to do both the print 'zine and the web page. Unfortunately, that's not the way it worked out. I put everything up on the web page that was in #18 before the issue actually came out, and when it did reach people's hands, they had already read a majority of the material. My mistake, and I've decided that the web page will remain dormant for most of the next few months. I'd rather put my effort on doing the print version. It's much more fun, and I get a lot more satisfaction out of doing it. I may put some random things up there, but I'm hoping that I can keep everything in the print version rather than on-line.

Are we really moving away from our 'fan' roots? No, I don't think so. Yes, Paradox is still a fanzine. This is done during our spare time, for fun. That's the way it has always been and will continue to be. Would we eventually like to take Paradox up a level and possibly do this for a living? It's a fanned's dream to become "pro." Jason and I have said during numerous issue productions in the past that we'd like to take Paradox to the edge, and become a professional magazine. Is that going to happen in the near future? Probably not. Not until we're out of college and can devote time to working on such a project. Maybe even never, but it's something that we've talked long and hard about, and I don't think it's wrong to have that kind of goal.

What I hope I have achieved in the production of this issue is to steer Paradox back on course. I agree that we were straying, and becoming pseudo-pro the last couple of issues. It was not the intent. I hope that eventually Jason and I can work on the production of an issue together just like the first few. The best work that we've done has always come out of working together on a single issue. I think the whole layout and feel of the issue is great, and I can compare it most to the production of issue #7/8, possibly one of the best issues we had done -- certainly the most popular. I can only hope that you enjoy reading this issue as much as I've enjoyed putting it together.

## SUBSCRIPTION PLEA!!

Since we don't know exactly when #20 will be out (probably before September), your best bet to make sure you get an issue is to send us the cover price of \$1. The next issue may be a little bigger, so if you act now you can get it for the regular price. Send it to Paradox, 316 E. 11th Ave., Naperville, IL 60563-2708. Our twentieth issue will be action-packed, you won't want to miss it!

**PARADOX**

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file under 'emergent youth'

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READS LIKE A  
JOURNAL,  
FEELS LIKE  
ONE. IS ONE.

# Editors' welcome

JASON'S

"The lives of successful publications, either independent or professional, are rarely marked by" . . . negative reviews from Arnie Katz!

Just joking, but the man himself recently reviewed Paradox 18, and in his classic form (no sarcasm intended), picked out the weaknesses of the issue and the drawbacks of taking two years off.

I think, looking back a few weeks, that issue 18 reads more like a journal than a fanzine. For some, such seriousness, the "industry update / trade publication" thing is okay, but it certainly wasn't vintage Paradox. Missing, except in subtle instances, was the characteristic humor and fun that has just come with publishing this 'zine. Chris and I never purposely tried to make anything funny in older issues and I didn't try to give number 18 a serious feeling. Things just come as they do, and issues tend to create their own identities.

So, here's 19. I think it will be closer to the old style of this fanzine, because as Arnie said, it's going to take some time for us to get back into the swing of things. Although we're not consciously trying to reinvent this 'zine, there are changes to be made, so you'll hopefully see some old Paradox concepts (and goofiness) in this issue.

There may be more gloss to the new issues of Paradox, but I hope there won't be any glossing over of the issues in the video gaming industry. That's one conscious change I've tried to make since finishing number 18. So as always, let us know what you think by sending a letter of comment, and contribute if you're capable or feel inspired. Until next time, enjoy.

## TUNED IN . . .

### Music and TV that influenced the production of the issue somehow some way.

No Doubt "Tragic Kingdom", Kesha's Domain, Cracker, Matthew Sweet (all albums), Elvis Costello and the Attractions "The Very Very Best of...", Mystery Science Theater 3000 (Secret Agent! BAH BAH! Super Dragon!), The TV Wheel, Ricki Lake, Dr. Drew and Adam Corolla on Loveline, The Bogmen "Life Begins at 40 Million", Del Amitri "Twisted", Zoltar's Industrial Zone, Q101, Alanis Morissette "Jagged Little Pill", Pulp Fiction Soundtrack, Reservoir Dogs Soundtrack, Smashing Pumpkins "Melon Collie and the Infinite Sadness", The Tracey Ullman Show, The Simpsons, Seinfeld, Nine Inch Nails, The Garry Shandling Show, Adam Sandler, Modern Rock Live, Pearl Jam, Singles Soundtrack, Bare Knuckle III Soundtrack, Angus Sountrack, Saturday Morning's Greatest Hits.

# Fan forum

HULLO?



The  
Mailbox

I wanted to drop you a line and let you know how much I enjoyed the "revived" Paradox #18. Very nice work. I got Paradox and EGM in the mail on Saturday and I read through Paradox two times before I even bothered to look at EGM. I hope you're able to publish at least one or two more issues before it's back to school in the fall.

I'm trying to clear out all of the boxes full of gaming magazines I have downstairs to make room for my computer, scanner, copier, and filing cabinets. There's hundreds of magazines, from 1988 to 1996 that I'd like to sell. Well, actually, a lot of them I'm giving away for "free," just for the cost of postage. Do you know of anyone who's looking for back issues? If you do, please feel free to give them my name and address. I've also got magazines like MacWorld and MacUser and PC Gamer and other PC gaming mags along with the video game ones, and I've been collecting music magazines since the late 1960s, so there's a lot of those for sale too.

Hope you have a good summer,

Robert Macheska  
P.O. Box 46  
Ransom, PA 18653

P.S. I've also got an issue of one of the graphic design magazines for sale - it's called Publish and it's got a six page article on fanzine design and writing called "The Changing Face of 'Zines." It's got samples of 'zines like Reign of Toads and Bunny Hop.

(JW -- Thanks for the compliments, Robert, and I can't deny a certain amount of sick pride in your comments about EGM and Paradox. It's good to here from one of the "old school" readers continued on page 16

# “Quotation Marks”

*It's not Quotable Quotes, so be QUIET!*

"If you make a game in which you knock things down, it will be fun."

-Chris Stamper, Rare, talking about Blast Corps.

"Get a booth in a mall and start handing them out or something."

-Mike Johnson, talking about a way to promote Paradox.

"Wouldn't it be funny to just have the guy say, 'The secret word is: GOOMBA!'"

- Jon Johnson, at E3

"Yes, I am familiar with your pricing policy."

-Jon Johnson, also at E3

"Mr. Ballz!"

- Jason and Chris describing Jon at the E3 as we snuck in a day early

## R.I.P. Quotable Quotes

# GROUND CONTROL TO MAJOR TOM

by Chris Johnston

**S**ega has taken a decidedly downward spin lately. A year after the Saturn was released, the system was at half the initial price. While that may not seem like such a big deal, it is to me. I bought the system at the full price, and ended up not liking all that many of the games that they released for it. I was banking on what didn't happen — a Sonic game. Did I jump the gun and get the system when I should have thought about it first? Definitely. Has Sega fallen from grace? Most assuredly.

The position they're in right now is not a favorable one. I'm sure that they realize that they have the most to lose right now of any video game company. The number one 16-bit manufacturer has stumbled through the early Saturn days, trying to make a pledge not to drop the Genesis or its 32X add-on, and releasing the system four months earlier than scheduled. This maddened not only third party developers, who were planning to have titles ready for a September release, not a May one, but consumers as well. Sega released a few games at the May launch, but then came upon a drought, not releasing any

**SEGA** Sega's been number one in 16-bit, but now they're not the only fish in the sea. So why are they messing up?

titles whatsoever until almost August. Way too long to go with no games. You'd almost think that Sega was trying to repeat Atari's bad marketing schemes.

Sega had good intentions, they were going to get a huge jump on Sony, and have the market to themselves for the summer. Unfortunately the summer is the slowest time to be selling any kind of new system. In the past, new systems have been released only during the pre-holiday times, and have done very well. Lack of new software in those first few months set them back behind Sony, who unleashed the PlayStation to consumers in September and couldn't keep stores stocked. Sony's advantage was that they had new titles coming out every single week. Sega didn't. Not until December was Sega ready to begin even

competing the Sony brigade. This slow response time is foolish, and it's a lot like what Nintendo does.

I can't stand it when a company says "NO" to a good game. Sega has been in and out with the company Deep Water, makers of Eternal Champions. What I can't understand is why Sega would not want an EC game on the Saturn. The Genesis version was a popular original fighter (not something you see every day), and the sequel on the Sega CD was even more popular. Considering it was one of the last Sega CD titles to come out, that's not all that surprising. I, for one, want to see what Deep Water can do with the Saturn. If it's a 3D version of EC, I'd be really eager to see what they can do with it. It would be the only original fighting game on the Saturn that hasn't been in the arcades first. While this may not be as extreme as Sony's "NO 2D" policy, I still think Sega could do a lot better.

What is with all of these arcade translations? I'm sorry, I'm just not impressed Sega. I bought the Saturn to play original games at home, and that hasn't happened yet. I'm still really beefed that Sonic isn't 2D. Not to say it's not going to be a good game, but I am opposed to the whole 3D movement. It seems like every single company under the sun is taking their 2D mas-

cots and turning them into 3D games. There's a reason side scrollers were so popular. They were 2D! Do I care if it looks like I'm the character wandering around a polygon world filled with enemies? No. What I would want to see on the Saturn or any other system is a good 2D game with ultra-detailed backgrounds and hundreds of levels. That's what I want to see, and I don't think I'm alone in that wish. This 3D revolution will die just as FMV "interactive" games have.

Now it comes out that Sega (indirectly) is going to be making games for the PlayStation. Showing amazing confidence in their own hardware, they'll bring games to the PlayStation such as Three Dirty Dwarves. Maybe they're producing bad games so that their own system looks good. I don't know, but it's a fishy situation.

The self-proclaimed avenger of video game violence, Sega has gone and done it again. It's like this company wants Lieberman and his band of blood-thirsty political cronies to jump all over them. A recent Sega print advertisement has a picture of a naked female spread out across two pages. Now, I'm not saying it's obscene or in any way "wrong" to do this kind of advertising. It's a clever ad that certainly got my eye wandering around the page to the various screens of their new games. But, this is a major step backward if you want to appease the government and say to parents, "we're setting an example for your children." Might as well strike up a deal with Larry Flynt Publications and give them a free complimentary copy of Hustler with every system purchase. Sega, if you're going to say nudity is good, then put some in your games! As long as Ultimate Gamer comes back with females holding Sega's analog controller in their crotch, it's not bad...

In favor of Sega, they officially killed the 32X at E3, and thank god they did. It was dead two days after they released it. Don't even think of reviving Virtual Hamster on the Saturn. I don't think pets play games. I've done the market research, believe me, they are not interested in video games.

## YEA!!

- Sci-Fi Channel for picking up MST3k (thank you!)
- THQ
- The guys at Orbital
- Arnie Katz, for continuing to review fanzines on ESCAPADE
- Sugar cookies
- Konami — this year they gave me a press kit and I didn't even have to ask!
- E3 moving to Atlanta — closer to the midwest and cheaper airfare to boot. ValuJet anyone?
- The 32X is dead, rejoice!
- Sept. 30 getting closer



# THE NES OF THE '90S?

## CONSOLE REPORT

Ten years after the NES, Sony repeats Nintendo's initial success story for themselves

by Jason Whitman

**A**s Sony's 32-bit system continues to dominate the current video game market, the question arises of whether or not such control can continue, especially with the upcoming release of the Nintendo 64 and its flagship Mario title. The answer remains to be seen, but there are definite similarities between Sony's current dominance of the market and the powerhouse NES of the 1980s. In both cases, Sega has been the distant second-place competitor.

The many similarities between the greatness of the NES and the growing success of the PlayStation can first be seen in their initial releases. The NES was released in late 1985, the PlayStation in late 1995, and both came during a lull in the gaming world, a changing of the guard. The NES was revolutionary in the days when "video games" were being played on Apple II computers and the Commodore 64, shortly after the software saturation of the Atari 2600 and the quickly forgotten, barely supported 5200 system. Sega tried to compete with its Master System, but with little advertising and publicity, few gamers even knew this system existed, even with its quality titles and 3D games.

The PlayStation introduced gamers to the potential of 32-bit gaming, the true new world of advanced graphics and gameplay, after Atari gave us the first taste of such games with the Jaguar. Street Fighter II was pushed aside for Toshinden and Tekken, and Sega's Saturn, even with its good arcade games, has been somewhat forgotten due to a lack of diversity and again a failure by Sega to successfully place it in the public eye.

### The Roots of Success

The NES gained nationwide attention for many reasons, but namely because it had Mario, the arcade hero who first appeared in the classic Donkey Kong and later in Super Mario Bros., the secret to Nintendo's success. When Super Mario Bros. was packed in with the NES, it virtually guaranteed success for Nintendo, as many budding game manufacturers wanted to try their hand at making titles for the new standard in what was now a true gaming industry once again. Arcade translations kept the Nintendo console in demand for game addicts, as they could now play their favorite games at home and didn't

have to raid their mother's purses for quarters to do so. Konami created Contra for the NES, which kept adolescent boys occupied for hours on end, and Tengen, in their pre-feudal days with Nintendo, kept adventure lovers and older gamers up nights with their arcade conversion of Gauntlet.

The PlayStation was introduced with the new arcade sensation Ridge Racer, which had impressed the new generation of arcade rats. Namco was the new Konami, then bringing Tekken home from the arcades, to the delight of 3D gaming fans who had since lost interest in SFII and its many clones on the SNES. Like with the NES, a strong introduction with games that everyone already knew spelled success for the PlayStation and provided a foundation upon which original games could be introduced. Although the Sega Saturn had arcade hits Virtua Fighter and Daytona USA, it is Sega's reliance on such translations that continues to hold the system back, as the PSX pushed ahead with original titles like Battle Arena, Toshinden and Wipeout, just as the NES had done with new, original games like Metroid and The Legend of Zelda.

The lesson to be learned here: you can use arcade translations to draw gamers in and get them hooked, but you have to provide something new, some diversity to keep them interested in your system. Without a good mix of games in different genres, gamers will simply lose interest and move back to the arcades, or in Sega's unfortunate case, to a competing system.

### Nintendo Had it Easy

The factor that may hold Sony back the most is the fact that the '90s are a competitive time for video gaming. The Nintendo 64 will be a popular machine simply because it is made by Nintendo, and there are many gamers who are sticking with the 16-biters a while longer, and for good reason — it's like a shopping spree with the low prices of SNES and Genesis games these days. There's also the contingent that is sticking with the systems for which they shelled out the big bucks, whether it's the Saturn, 3DO, or even the Jaguar, and won't be buying another new system anytime soon.

The NES never had such competition, except for those who stuck with the Apple II, Commodore 64, or Atari 7800. But it seemed that even these gamers eventually defected, back

in the age when you could pick up a NES for under 100 bucks. Now, with systems running gamers no less than \$250 with a game, there is less incentive to switch systems or buy multiple ones, and it seems that most gamers are staying loyal to one system by choice or because of a small budget. Either way, the PlayStation will probably never be in 40 percent of homes as the NES achieved due to a newer, more complex video game marketplace.

### It Will Be Sony Vs. Nintendo

Yet, the PlayStation has a lead over its biggest competitor in the Saturn and an even bigger one over the Nintendo 64, although Nintendo is sure to catch up quickly. Can the PlayStation effectively combat Super Mario 64? Sony has publicly declared that it will not be a mascot-driven company, yet history tells us that the most successful ones usually are. But Sony wants to stay focused on the older gaming market, a move that may break them sales-wise, as kids will certainly want the new Nintendo system this Christmas. Yet with a user base that certainly includes such kids that received PSX systems last Christmas and a three to one system lead over the Saturn, Sony has the control that could allow the PlayStation to dominate the '90s. There needs to exist for Sony a plan to combat the Nintendo 64 if they hope to succeed, however, as Nintendo simply drives this market. It is the AT&T, the Microsoft of gaming, and to Sony's disadvantage, Nintendo has yet to lose such a battle.

# NAY!!

- Voice mail
- People who don't call you back ever
- Not responding to e-mail
- My system's better than your <insert opposing system here>!!!
- Doug Horzog and Comedy Central for cancelling MST3k
- People who tempt you with offers then go on two week vacations without contacting you

# DO THE MATH: ATARI TURNED ITS BACK ON GAMERS

by Jason Whitman

**GAMING SET ABLAZE** Now that they're gone, a small look back on their many fumbles

If there existed a complete history of video games, there would be no greater disappointment than the Atari Corporation. It has consistently forgotten the interests of the gaming public and the amount of money that some of us have put into its forgotten systems. Granted, Atari provided many thrills in the early 1980s with the 2600, but from there on, Atari can only be regarded with untruths, systems with great potential that were just forgotten, and an unwillingness to stick with what they started.

The first disappointment for many gamers was the failure of the Atari 5200, a system with great potential and good games that was abandoned due to technical problems and some limited software support. While this system did play many of the same games that the 2600 did, it did so in a much more realistic and arcade-like manner, getting fans of the Pac-Man and Pitfall! series hooked immediately. Yet when the 5200's weak controllers broke from the type of abuse that the 2600's could endure, Atari called it quits, leaving this as the first headstone in the Atari graveyard. Now, some gamers continue to play great versions of classic arcade games on the 5200, never to know what could have become of the most powerful Atari system released in the '80s, while others dub it a joke or don't even know of its existence.

The 7800 was next for Atari and was a somewhat effective release, as gamers with broken-down 2600s could have a new system on which to play the classics and could pick up some new games to boot, including the great Desert Falcon and a true arcade translation of the original Mario Bros. game. The system itself and the games for it were overpriced, turning off many Atari fans, but the 7800 had potential, if even to only thwart some potential NES buyers in the late 1980s. But that system died as well, not necessarily because of Atari, but because the NES was so powerful and had the kind of quality third-party support that Atari could never muster. So 7800 games hit clearance racks (I bought 25 of them for a dollar each two years ago), and another headstone joined the Atari graveyard, as the company abandoned the machine in just a few years for what would be not necessarily bigger, but certainly better, things.

As Atari executives sat around playing 7800 carts in Sunnyvale one afternoon, they

brainstormed about the concept of a cartridge-based portable game system, what would be the first of its kind and regarded as technical genius because it played games in full color. Actually, the concept for what would become the Atari Lynx came from the computer game manufacturer Epyx, which was making carts for the 7800 at the time and dropped out of the project soon after the machine's release when it went bankrupt. Nevertheless, the Lynx is a wonderful portable and a high-quality system in its own right, running faster and with better graphics than any of the console systems of the time. It would soon be Atari's biggest disappointment.

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**“They have disappointed loyal owners of their systems with no places for new software, except for a few select mail order houses, none of which are supported by Atari...”**

.....

The Lynx sported beautiful color graphics and put the soon-to-be-released Nintendo Game Boy's green "make your head explode 'cause you squint so hard" screen to shame. Its games were of the highest quality as well, as Atari Corp. collaborated with Atari Games for the first time in years for titles such as Klax, STUN Runner, Rygar and Hydra. Klax on the Lynx was the best version ever released with great graphics and voice, and STUN Runner was the only home version of the classic arcade game ever made. The Lynx really came into its prime with the 3D spectacular Warbirds, one of the best multi-player games ever, Checkered Flag, which recalled fond memories of the Pole Position arcade games, and Battlewheels, the crazy multi-player cart from Beyond Games.

Atari soon began to neglect the Lynx, but eventually released the second, more compact Lynx and good titles such as Toki, the classic strategy game Rampart, and the free mail-away Batman Returns. It seemed that the ma-

chine was on the rebound, and owners were still being blessed with quality games, as Atari began a TV advertising campaign for the smaller machine and the new sports titles NFL Football and Baseball Heroes. But then the company stopped supporting it. According to reports, it was due to the shortage of funds that Atari has always experienced, and Lynx games were no longer available as software stores and toy stores stopped carrying the machine. Limited titles were made available direct from Atari, including late releases like Ninja Gaiden III, and Home Shopping Club and the retail chain Venture were given the last of the stock to be sold at reduced prices. The Lynx was dead, and games are available now through just a few mail order houses like Toad Software. A third headstone, and for Lynx owners, a betrayal by Atari, because the Lynx was and still is a great portable system. Atari fans were angry, but gave the company their trust for one last system, and once again, received only disappointment in return.

I never even believed back in 1993 that the Atari Panther/Sparrow/Jaguar would be released, yet it actually happened. But now, just as quickly, the Jaguar, a system that gave us one of the greatest cartridge games ever in Tempest 2000, is dead. After its release a little over two years ago, the Jaguar looked like it could be the system to beat, with the ultra-fast Wolfenstein 3D, a great translation of Doom that is still one of the best ever made, and Tempest, a wonderful update on the arcade original with great gameplay and music from whiz programmer Jeff Minter. Atari fans had a lot of hot carts on their hands, but as usual, Atari hit a lull, and there were only a few games available for months. Atari reacted in rare form, however, releasing the 3D action cart Iron Soldier, the second 2000 series title in Defender 2000, and the best cart version of NBA Jam Tournament Edition on the home market. Jaguar owners were jazzed for the release of the Jag CD and sequels Blue Lightning CD and Battlemorph, and screen shots of Breakout 2000 and Missile Command 3D hit the streets. Atari was ready to go head-to-head as best it could with Sony and Sega, lowering the price of the system to just \$99 and the CD add-on to \$149, but then, in its famous form, quit.

The Tramiel family sold Atari Corp. to *continued on page 8*

# Pardon me, may I use your CD as a coaster?

## MODE SEVEN The Nintendo 64 and the uphill climb to get back to number one

by Chris Johnston

The Nintendo 64 is the culmination of Nintendo's alliance with Silicon Graphics Inc., and they've been working on it for a few years now. The finished product is done and out in Japan, but U.S. gamers have to wait until September 30th to find out what 64-bit gaming is really about. There's no doubt that it's going to be a huge success. After playing Mario 64 at E3, I am a devout believer in the N64. Its rocky start and even rockier development makes me wonder if Nintendo is going to mess up a good thing or be able to pull it off and come out a winner.

It all starts with the decision to go to cartridge. I think Nintendo made the right choice in this respect. It ensures that the system will be cheap enough for entry-level buyers and take away complaints about CD access time that plagues both the Sega and Sony systems. Carts are more expensive to produce than CDs, but for the first round of titles, I don't think it will matter all that much. What's going to matter is the gameplay of the first batch of cartridge N64 games. Mario 64 has already proven itself as a superb example of what the machine can do. Miyamoto has succeeded in providing gamers with a totally new Mario adventure. Unlike Sonic, which has stagnated for years (since Sonic 2), Mario has evolved and become a more complex game each time.

What will be the real testimony is if Nintendo can make more games that are a blast to play. Of the games announced, I think that they have a good amount of fantastic titles. Mario Kart R, Starfox 64, Kirby...all have the potential to be super-hits. I just hope that Nintendo can keep pumping out titles frequently enough to keep everyone satisfied. So far, only Nintendo and a select few developers are working on games for the system. Acclaim's doing Turok, and, well...you know my opinion of Acclaim. I think they've nose-dived ever since they lost Midway's licensing. Turok may be their saving grace, depending on how well the game is received. It looks as if it's just another Doom clone, and I'm getting real sick of those fast. If there's no networking capability, then what's the point? Maybe I shouldn't rag on it so much, it's probably a pretty good game. But with Doom, Quake, and Duke Nuke 'Em bound to be released on the N64 sooner or later, Turok's going to have to have something original to compete.

Nintendo's 64DD Drive...now that's a laughable peripheral if I ever saw one. Maybe moreso than the Sega CD. I don't understand why Nintendo would choose to go magnetic when it's so much easier (and cheaper) to go with compact discs. The disks that the 64DD uses have a much smaller capacity than CDs do, and we all know how fast "limits" are reached. I recall a time when Strider and Star Control were hailed as revolutionary because they had more megabytes than any other games on the market. It only went up from there, and people thought, "Gee, games won't be able to get any bigger than 16 meg." They were wrong. Maybe Nintendo's wrong at saying that 64 MB is all they're going to need for the rest of the N64's lifespan.

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**“Magnetic disks don't take the kind of abuse that can be dealt out. Eventually, they break down. I like to store my games near a big electro magnet. What am I going to do?”**

.....

On the other hand, maybe they're not wrong in choosing 64 MB as their limit. Game data on a CD takes a minimal amount of space, with the rest filled up by red book audio. From the sounds of Mario 64, maybe the N64 doesn't need red book audio after all. Personally I'm of the opinion that if it's good music, it can be either red book or yellow. I have always liked the music on the SNES, especially that of Zelda and Final Fantasy III. To put the music into data shouldn't be that hard, and it may not take up a lot of space either.

There is a problem inherent with magnetic disks: storage. The N64, if I'm not mistaken, is targeted at a much younger audience than the PlayStation or Saturn is. This audience isn't exactly the most careful group. Cartridges were basically indestructible if you took decent care of them. I've seen people have their cartridges knee deep in food scraps and they still work fine. Magnetic disks don't take the kind of abuse that can be dealt out. Eventually, they break down. I like to store my games near a big electro magnet. What am I going to do, eh? Well, O.K... so I don't really do that, but what is a simple little

magnet going to do to the disk? What if you're playing during a lightning storm and a surge goes through your system. Will all the game data be gone?

Will the 64DD even gain acceptance needed to make it worthwhile for licensees to begin developing for it? I don't think that it will, at least not as fast as the cartridge system. Gamers have been burned on add-ons in the past, although Nintendo has never made an add-on for their home systems in the 10 years that they've been selling them in the U.S. The Sega CD and 32X have taught people a lesson, and even though "it's Nintendo," they aren't going to be rushing in and buying the 64DD the first day of its release. There will always be a few crazy souls who will, but that doesn't cover the entire N64 user base. With both a N64 and a 64DD, the end price to the consumer is over \$400, and that's before you even begin to buy games.

Another "in-favor" argument for the disks are that compression today has advanced to the point that 64MB can mean a heck of a lot of compressed data. Nintendo's RAMbus technology will make a lot of difference in that area.

Licensees have looked at the system with a cautious eye, and rightfully so. Nintendo hasn't exactly been "open" with information about developing for the system. Compared to other machines, the Nintendo 64 sounds expensive to develop for, what with SGI equipment needed and Nintendo's approval. If I was a third party, I would be playing a waiting game as well. The question is whether or not the Nintendo 64 will bring in the kind of user base that Nintendo is projecting that it will. The Nintendo brand name alone will bring in hundreds of thousands of new customers by the end of the year. Many of those same customers will have another machine, either the PSX or Saturn. Companies will either be porting their games to every system or having to create new and innovative games for each one. That can be difficult. Then there's the question of which Nintendo 64 format do we want to go with, cart or 64DD?

Should Nintendo just have admitted that cart was dead and made the N64 a CD machine like everyone else? No, I don't think so. Had they done that, it would have been \$400 to get in on Nintendo's new machine instead of \$250. I give them credit for attempting to save the consumer some money. If you can make a CD peripheral for, say, \$150 or less than why not just do that instead of making a disk drive

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that more than likely won't catch on like you think it will.

In a Nintendo press release dated May 28th, 1992, the following paragraph appeared:

"...[Peter] Main says that at this point, games companies 'run the risk of introducing yesterday's technology, with considerably less than great games. With the price points for CD ROM being relatively high, there will be no strong market until there is exciting software to support the hardware. The disappointing rollout of the competition's CD ROM drives in Japan underscores the point. We will not introduce new hardware until either our own game designers or our almost 170 worldwide independent developers and licensees have produced games that offer players real CD ROM technology and value for their investment."

Clearly, it should be obvious to Nintendo that most/all of their licensees have produced quality CD ROM games for both the Sega Saturn and Sony PlayStation. They have

value for their investment. Therefore, Nintendo, using their own words, should be making a CD peripheral for the N64! Where the 'disappointing' rollout came around was when the machine was merely an add-on. I think this is going to be a major stumbling block for the 64DD when it comes out. About introducing yesterday's technology: is CD really an obsolete format? It can hold more data than a 64DD disk, is cheaper to produce, and can last forever. I think what Nintendo is doing is releasing yesterday's technology. Magnetic disks can and have been very successful on PCs, what with IOmega's Zip and Jaz drive formats. But those are for PCs where gameplaying isn't going to be what the disks are used for. With these drives on PC, there's not really that much of a hullabaloo over access time and things that deal with video games. Which is what it's all about, after all.

I just think that while Nintendo may be "Focused on Fun," they need to look a little harder at the way they're handling the N64 and focus on that.

GO-ATARI is now 1-800-2SCREW-U, as it doesn't care about the users of its products. Money problems or not, there is no excuse for this type of day-to-day decision-making. The Atari style of "let's make a system today, let's forget it tomorrow" is now over, and even as an owner of all of its systems, I'm glad the company and its second-rate moves are gone.

*continued from page 6*

a disk drive maker a few months ago, without much announcement and without care for Jaguar owners or their pocketbooks. Once again, they have disappointed loyal owners of their systems with no places for new software, except for a few select mail order houses, none of which are supported by Atari, for it fails to exist in any form now outside of creating disk drives. 1-800-

## HEAR THE ROAR!

**T**here is a list for those who want to see Telegames take on the yet unreleased but finished titles wasting away at Atari. We should let Telegames know that we would strongly support such an endeavor. I (Steve Scavone) would also personally like to thank 4Play for not giving up hope on us. Thanks guys (and gal.)

**New Note:** Telegames is all for this effort! I have had some contact and they are encouraging the effort for us to round up support. They say if we can get over 6,000 signees to join, it would be financially feasible to produce the games we desire. Start reaching out to ALL the Jag owners you know. Telegames, once again, is ENCOURAGING this effort!!!! Remeber, there are 150,000 Jag owners out there. Let's get em together!!!! :)

These games would include, at least Skyhammer, Breakout 2000, Zero 5, Phase Zero (if at all possible), and a few others. Send me some of your own suggestions on games you'd like to see. Telegames would probably be open to anything they could get at least 7000 people

to buy. That's not a lot of people and with the help of all you 'zine dudes, I can easily get them this.

Also there is an underground pool of Jaguar developers(hackers programming the Jaguar through other means than Atari's dev kit(the Jag Server for instance, which allows an Atari computer owner to program a modified Jaguar[e-mail roine.stenberg@stacken.ct.se for more info on the server]). Put together this underground with Telegames marketing and we could very well make history as the first shareware console movement ever. This could be big.

If you're interested in helping Steve out with this mission, send him a message via e-mail at krunch@intac.com. If you don't have access to e-mail, then if you can send a note to us asking us to send him your name, we'll do so. Anyone else who wants to promote this, I would encourage you to do so. However, Steve asks that if you want your name on the petition that you be legit, and WILLING to buy the games that Telegames releases.

## NEO FAN QUIZ

### THE RETURN

Back again with another brain-twisting quiz. Think you're up to the challenge? We'll soon find out.

- When Nintendo first teamed up with Silicon Graphics to make a 64-bit video game system, it was called \_\_\_\_\_?
- Donkey Kong Country is known by a different name in Japan. What is it?
- Sonic the Hedgehog has made one cameo appearance in a game not produced by Sega for the Genesis. What's the name of that game?
- Todd Capriotti was the editor of what now-defunct magazine?
- Imagine Publishing, makers of fine quality magazines like Next Generation and Mac Addict, is the American arm of what U.K. firm?
- Name five Game Fan staff members and the pseudonyms they go by. If you're reading this and you work for Game Fan, this should be patthetically easy.
- What was Acclaim's first video game? (HINT: it's on the NES, and no, it's not a licensed game)
- What does the word 'Nintendo' mean in Japanese?
- Sega didn't always have SoA to release their systems and games. What toy company originally helped them out by distributing the Master System?
- Puyo Puyo is a popular Japanese puzzle game. But game companies here don't think it can do well without an injection of new characters. Name two Americanized versions of Puyo Puyo.
- Nintendo's been around for more than 100 years, but video games haven't. What product originally made Nintendo famous?
- What's the name of the fictional land in the Zelda games?

You'll find the answers on the last page of this issue. Good luck, these are some pretty tough questions. If you got them all right on the first try, without having to look anything up, you're a genius! If you had to look a few things up or rack your brain for more than 24 hours, then you're still pretty good. If you didn't know any of these, you just haven't been studying.

# Video Darwinism

## PAST The days of originality are gone

by Joe Ottosen

One of the most persistent complaints dogging video games lately is that they lack innovation. People are quick to point the glut of fighting games on today's market and all too often, they say in the same breath "Oh, how I miss when the games were innovative!" Of course, that usually means they are referring to the arcades of the late '70's and the early 80's.

I find it strange that people can complain about too many fighting games and still manage to recall a time when most of the games offered were shooters as one of the few innovative times in the industry.

Does this mean that the old arcade games weren't fun? Of course not. Does it mean a 2D fighter released now isn't fun because it shares a genre in common with one of the most prolific genres to come along in a while? No. Obviously the games must offer something if they continue to sell so well that more and more keep being made. It's a simple case of survival of the fittest. If one innovative title makes money, you can bet that companies will start making more of the same type.

It's too bad that people expect game concept innovations to come by leaps and bounds simply because new technology is available. Technology doesn't dictate creativity, and

the market has shown over the years that copying a proven genre is bound to make a fair amount of money.

Now if a new idea comes along, the reaction seems to always be for people to feverishly buy the game and praise it. In the same breath while they're saying, "Finally! A truly innovative game!" they are also saying, "So... when's the sequel coming out?" There's also the problem of a short attention spans. As soon as a fresh idea appears quite a few gamers are already thinking "That's nice, but what's next?" I want more creative games now.

The truth is, new ideas have always been fairly rare. You only get a truly innovative game once every few years. Just look at the Genesis when it came out. You basically had side scrolling shooters and various platformers. In the arcade of the late '80's we had shooters, and 3/4 view side scrolling fighting games like Double Dragon. Then came Street Fighter 2, then came Virtua Fighter which essentially takes us to our current situation today.

All I'm asking people to do is put aside their nostalgia for a few minutes and actually look at what was really there. If you do, you'll be surprised to find the levels of innovation have stayed about the same with only the formats and genres changing.



## Give us a reason to ROW!

The only way you can insure that you'll see future issues of Paradox is by helping us continue the tradition that we've been keeping up with for about five years now. Well, two of those years were without issues, but give us a break. There are a couple of things that you (YES, you!) can do to make sure we're around.

**- CONTRIBUTE** an article. If you have an opinion about the gaming industry, we'd like to print it. We accept all kinds of articles for print, from anyone, any age. We can't guarantee that we'll print it, but if we do, you'll get an issue for free.

**- WRITE** a letter of comment. Our Fan Forum section presents letters from our readers, and we'd like to see your name in there. Give us your take on fandom, comment on the issue, or debate a point brought up by one of our articles. If you can't contribute a whole article, at least write us a letter via regular mail or e-mail.

**- PASS** this issue around to your friends. If they want their own personal copy, they can xerox it and have one for themselves. Xerox an article you think was particularly interesting and post it by the office watercooler or your mom's refrigerator (and give us a good magnet too).

Here's how: check our e-mail addresses at the front of the issue, and send your material to the Editors (Jason and Chris). We'll probably respond to you, chat a while, etc. OR, if you don't have net access, then send your stuff to one of the editors at their home addresses. If you're really bold, you can even give us a call. If we don't know who you are, make yourself known!

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# TEAM-UPS

..... WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE .....

*\*but probably will never happen*

**S**onic Team and Shigeru Miyamoto (not just Miyamoto, but the people behind the Mario series as a whole) - yeah, it'll never happen, but just imagine what kinds of games we'd be playing if it did. A Mario and Sonic team-up game? Makes me wonder what kind of chaos could be wreaked if supervillians Dr. Robotnik and King Koopa got together. Mechanoid Koopas would be all over the place. You'd be able to switch between Mario and Sonic just like the ol' Sonic/Tails switcheroo in previous Sonic games. Super-detailed backgrounds and amazing music, I would be first in line for this one!

**C**apcom and Namco - The company who has turned Street Fighter 2 into the game with eternal life teams up with the company behind many a 3-D fighting game. The result would be a mix of Tekken and the SF games. The characters from Tekken show up to battle the World Warriors with excellent 3-D graphics. Ryu Vs. Law would definitely be a game that I'd like to see. Also from this team-up is a Mega-Man driving game called Mega Rockman Racer Revolution. Fast graphics and rockin' techno tunes accompany your race against Dr. Wily in the Black Lambo.

The best of what fandom had to offer...a few years back **RANDOM**

## Pr0file:

**Fanned:** Todd Lintner

**Whereabouts:** Currently a sophomore attending the University of Minnesota in the Twin Cities.

**Fanzine:** MASTER Minds

**Last known publication date:** #15, Spring '95

**Issue Price:** \$1 (like they all were back then)

**Issues Produced On:** A Brother Word Processor

**Home Address:** 6406 Jacobs Way, Madison, WI 53711-3209

**E-mail:** [lint0006@gold.tc.umn.edu](mailto:lint0006@gold.tc.umn.edu) (during the school year Late Aug. - Early May)

by Chris Johnston

There was a time when fandom flourished – new fanzines cropped up almost every month, and there was a sense of community like no other. That was a time when Arnie Katz's Fandango appeared in Video Games and Computer Entertainment, and later, Fandom Central in Electronic Games. For this first installment of Vortex Retro, I went back into the pile of 'zines that I have collected over the years, and pulled out MASTER Minds. Not a 'zine that resorted to foolish self-promotion, MASTER Minds was smaller but well-known within the gaming fandom community as an accepted outsider. Favorable reviews appeared in other 'zines like Ulrich Kempf's mega-popular 'zine Video Views, and in Arnie Katz's fandom column. In issue #14 of Video Views, Ulrich said of Todd's writing style, "his unique combination of humor and sarcasm makes for some entertaining reading." I couldn't agree more.

Covering primarily the Sega Master System, hence the name, MASTER Minds, and later the Genesis, MM was published sporadically (and I suppose still is). I only received up to issue #9 of the 'zine, and then skipped up to number 13, which was the first to use Microsoft Publisher. What exists in issues 4-9 is a sheer love of video gaming and for producing a 'zine. Lintner mixes serious reviews of games with satirical looks at the industry, including my favorite "Alex Kidd To Be Sacrificed To The Goat God" [pictured on this page]. The former Sega mascot (before Sonic appeared on the scene) was a favorite of those who had stuck by Sega during the Master System years. Todd's story on the sacrifice makes me laugh out loud even now, re-reading it in a time when Sega isn't doing very well and might start sacrificing other characters, like ToeJam & Earl. What has to be the most hilarious part about the whole thing is the picture on the cover of Sega's CEO, Tom Kalinske,

in pagan dress.

MM had what other 'zines didn't: insight on the Sega scene and pure expertise in writing about gaming. Included in the older issues of MM were an editor's welcome, Joe Bob Watches Some Flicks, Joe Bob Reads Some 'Zines, a collection of game reviews, and a back page with a quote from Dimples the Dingo, the 'zine's pseudo mascot (even though he's only ever pictured on the back page or at the end of the issue). What was great about MM is that the 'zine had such a great style, very straightforward and poked fun at what deserved it.

**T o d a y**  
Todd doesn't follow video games quite as much as he used to. "Seems more or less the same old thing, just more advanced technology. System prices hover around that \$200 mark generally. The industry has progressed as it should, nothing too surprising has happened," he says. He admits that he hasn't been reading the gaming mags lately, but has heard major gaming news like the fall release of the N64.

Turning to fandom, Todd is skeptical about its current state. "What's left of it...there seems to be a bit of a revival going on right now, but it is nowhere near what it was before. I read something in V that the new 'zines were more slick, less opinionated. I haven't seen many new 'zines so I can make a judgment." His advice to budding fanned today is to "be sure to put character, personality into it. Don't do it just for free games or industry contact. Base it on your love of the hobby, and go from there. After all, it's just a 'zine, I think the key is individuality."

MM had the kind of individuality that you don't see too often in today's crop of fanzines. A laid back layout, very easily readable, and great features every issue. Sure, it was done on a simple word processor, but it is extremely fun to read Todd's opinions on games and the industry in

general. Reading this 'zine is a lot like having a conversation about gaming with someone who knows the hobby really well and isn't afraid to state opinions.

In issue #9, the cover announces Todd's death at the hands of frothing fanneds. What follows is a fakes news story about the event, which included MIA fanneds Lance Rice of the Subversive Sprite and Ed Finkler, who then was working on Mosh Baby Mosh. "Reaction to the death was decidedly moot. No one answered when asked to reminisce on the life of the fallen fanned."

A macabre light, but interesting and entertaining reading nonetheless. What fanned hasn't dreamed of faking his own death just to announce it on the cover of the 'zine he's responsible for?

Todd's work showed up in other popular 'zines as well. cyber Drome, cyberBeat, The Genesource Monthly, The Altered Beat and Video Views. A good mix of 'zines, but all of them considered the classics of old school fandom, especially cyberBeat.

So will Todd come back to fandom

to put out another MASTER Minds? "Possibly. I can't see doing it during the school year. I've had an issue done, I just haven't printed it. I'm thinking of printing #16, possibly doing #17 if there's any interest."

*...and that's our little excursion into gaming fandom's past for this month. Next month promises to be an interesting little ride, but I won't divulge exactly which 'zine will be covered. Another of fandom's classic 'zines from the days when I used to do The Bombardier. Maybe not that far back, but a fanzine that you probably haven't seen for more than a few years. It should be real interesting to see if I can track more fanneds down. Comments on this column are welcome, and damned if I see any other 'zines copying this idea!! Back to the stack...*

# vortex RETRO

PROZINES Battle of the prozine web pages

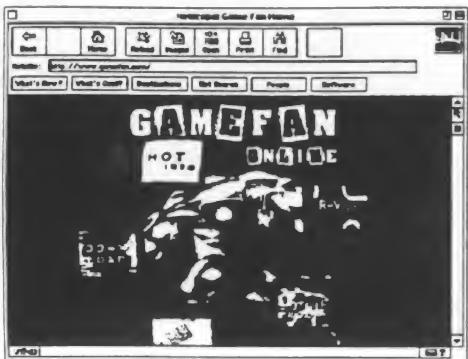
# Nick Rox

## Fan Club

### NOW COME TO ORDER?

by Chris Johnston

**N**ick Rox aka Nick Des Barres shows up in the strangest of places sometimes. I was recently looking through my stack of older fanzines, when I ran across Dennis



Crowley's gaming rag, Dystopia. You might remember it as the 'zine fandom loved to hate. For the longest time there was a huge rivalry between Dystopia and MJ Lesnick's Video Apocalypse. Anyway, I flipped through it to relive those times, when I saw a very familiar name on his list of staff and contributors. It seems that our good pal Nick Rox was first working for Dystopia, and in the issue I have, he did a review of Phantasy Star IV for the Genesis. Nowhere was the phrase "gaming bliss" used. Shows Nick has changed since those days. A letter from fellow DHGF staff member Casey Loe also appears in that issue, which makes you wonder if Dystopia is really the place where prozines are getting new talent these days...nah!

Speaking of Nick Rox, in the current issue of Game Fan, he's GONE from the masthead, and doesn't appear anywhere in the issue! This created a mini-riot on AOL one night in the Video Games Lounge, where a few die-hard Rox fans wept openly about the apparent disappearance of their beloved idol. Don't weep too openly just yet though, Nick really hasn't left Game Fan (was there really any doubt?). Seems he's just away working on a project -- Game Fan's Nightwarriors strategy guide. He should be back next month. Whatever happened to Slasher Quan anyways? First I had heard Matt Taylor had gone to finish his education back in his home state. Then he's working for Game Fan. Now he's gone, what's up with that? Maybe it has something to do with the little "incident" that happened a while ago with Game Fan Sports.

Is GamePro's kiddie reputation still justified? The magazine has made strides in being more text-oriented in the past year. They're still not Next Generation by any means, but they're just a little more "intelligent" than they used to be. Now if they'd only get rid of those silly faces. I still read GamePro, it's a great source of strategies and tips. If you've got to be good at something, might as well be that.

The rivalry between Next Generation Online and Intelligent Gamer Online is heating up. IGO's new format is clean, concise, and fast to download. Whereas Next Generation's site hasn't had much new in a month or so. Plus, I find myself loading up an older version of Netscape or using MS Internet Explorer to view NGO because of those cursed frames! There's a fine line between good use and overuse of frames.



I'm happy that IG's site doesn't use them. Other than that, IG's site has a lot more depth. I only use NGO for news, nothing else. After a month of being completely uncontested, NGO has been outdone by IGO once again. Good to see a little competition.

New to the web is Game Fan, with a site that contains pictures, reviews, news, and more. Also on tap for the GameFan site are Quicktime movies of the latest games. That may be an idea stolen from NG (the king site for quicktimes), but if they can pull it off, we'll be seeing quicktimes of Japanese games instead of just looking at stills in the pages of their magazine.

Recently there's been a rash of "metooing" with regards to news, etc. Game Fan Online's very short blurb on news that Nintendo

was seeking a 6-week exclusivity on the SNES Street Fighter Alpha 2 was quickly (and blatantly) copied by Next Generation Online. The difference? One or two words here and there are added to make it sound like an NG original story. Those of us who surf all sites know the truth though. If this keeps up, someone is going to trip up eventually. Since the story didn't have any sources, either in NGO or GFO, one can only assume that they have the same sources, or NG copied. No fair, that's cheating... get your own info!

There have been grumblings on usenets about Game Fan's ugly situation with subscriptions, some people haven't received issues in months. I suggest that Game Fan get a clue and straighten this out. Get your customer service people some answers, Halverson! Sheesh, you'd think it was High End or something.

Sendai is now part of the Ziff-Davis publishing conglomerate. Brings a tear to my eye to see the company brought to life my a video gaming fan being assimilated into nothingness. Then again, quality of the mags will go up, and maybe EGM will get better instead of steadily worse like it has been. Gone to work on the online side of things, Steve Harris is no longer the company's main man. Maybe he'll go on to bigger and better things in the future. Let's hope. NUKE, Sendai's gaming and media site on the 'net has been garnering praise from other media outlets, but has been the victim of brash criticism from fans, who have to sit there for the time it takes to load the hugely graphic intensive page. Gotta remember that not everybody has access to ISDN yet.



# ROBO PIT

by TH\*Q/Kokopeli Digital Studios/Altron  
PlayStation - CD-ROM - 1-2 Players

Available August

Reviewed by Chris Johnston

TH\*Q has never been a company that has had a reputation for quality games. In many gaming 'zines they've even had a reputation for being the "suck benchmark" by which all other games were judged. I for one am very happy to see them emerge from this recognition, and from what they were showing at E3, it seems that they've certainly gotten their act together and are going full force into original games (as I chronicled last issue).

Robo Pit is the second game that really shows what TH\*Q, with a little effort, can produce. The first game to really give them recognition was In The Hunt, a game which was a sleeper hit at arcades, and garnered good reviews from video gaming magazines.

Robo Pit is a rock'em sock 'em game where you are able to build and demolish your very own robot. There's also a two-player mode where you and a friend can duke it out until there are only pieces left.

The creation factor is huge in this game. After building up a sufficient stock of parts, you can create a kick-ass bot to go take on the world with. Of course, it doesn't have the sheer power of, say, a Tom Servo or Crow T. Robot, but in this game you can kick some robot heinie with massive amounts of weaponry. There are 30 different "arms" you can use, all of which are variations of pretty much your basic arm. They range from axes to crossbows, hands and suckers.

When you gain a new arm, you have to build up its strength by using it to defeat other robots. This little role-playing element adds quite a bit to the game, but I found that I like using Punch 4 all too much. It's waaay too powerful after getting it to 100%, that I didn't need any of the other arms. Of course, I equipped Shield 4 also, and got its power up significantly enough that I could defeat almost any 'bot that got in my way.

The game has a feel of CyberSled mixed with Jumping Flash. If you can imagine a game like that, then this is it. It's a fun game, but over way too quickly. There's not much challenge present, in that you can use the same attack to get to the top of the ranks out of 100 robot opponents. The most significant downfall is that you can skip around, and increase your rank by fighting robots much higher than you in the standings. For instance, if you're ranked 95, you

Over here we have 50 single women! And over here we have 50 single guys! Let's play...

# REVIEWED OUT!!!

can fight opponents in the low '80s and upper '70s. You can skip opponents, making it much harder to make the game last. I was also hoping there would be harder "bosses". Once you learn their pattern, it's child's play to avoid them and then attack, being able to win 75% of the time. It took me about half a day to get up to the top 10 in rank.

The two player section of the game is much better, although it too has flaws. It's not suited to group play, because you have to create a new robot for each player. Otherwise you're stuck with one player having a hugely powerful 'bot, and the other players having wimpy ones.

Bottom line is that this game is a step in the right direction for the people at TH\*Q. It's an enjoyable game that has some really nice touches. Unfortunately, it has some flaws which take a LOT away from the game, especially in the 2-player mode (which could have been MUCH better), and the quickness of the 1-player game. Fewer opponents and tougher battles could have cured that. All in all, I have to hand it to TH\*Q — this is no 'Family Dog 2'. It's a good game that is worth a rent if you have the chance.

# PHASE 1

by Seibu/Fabtek  
Arcade - 1-2 Players  
Available for play now

Reviewed by Chris Johnston

Phase 1 is another game in the Raiden series of arcade shooters. It looks like Raiden, plays like Raiden, and hey! it's made by the same company that made Raiden. So I guess that means that it's a new Raiden game, eh? This fantastic shooter takes place on war-torn post-apocalyptic Earth, in space, and just about anywhere else where planes can do battle with mechanoid enemies.

There simply aren't enough shooters these days. We used to have a good many, but now it's all drab compared to the joy of Space Megaforce (which was DENIED a best shooter of all time recognition by GamePro in favor of one of the lamest games of all time, Super R-

Type). Phase 1 brings back memories of playing Raiden on the Jaguar, and Raiden Project on the PlayStation. I loved those games, and I like this game too.

Fantastically detailed graphics, complemented by stunning use of color. Explosions are big, and you can feel the firepower that your craft possesses. There's nothing better than blasting enemies and collecting many power-ups to aid in your quest. This game ups the ante a little bit by allowing you to have multiple weapons at once, including a laser and a spread gun activated, plus the all-important missiles.

Arcades now are filled with the likes of Killer Instinct 2, Tekken 2, and any other fighting game imaginable. I'm sick of it. When I went into the arcade, I looked for something new, something different, not the same ol' same ol' that you get from fighting games. Spending two tokens on a game that may only last a few minutes is really stupid. With 4 tokens, I got quite far on Phase 1, probably because I've played Raiden so many times before.

The game was tucked away in the corner of the arcade, far away from any KI2 machine. Using my tokens on a quality game like this is something that I can come away being satisfied with, and I know I'll play it again if I get the chance. If you see it, I suggest you do the same.

# RANMA 1/2

by RunicSoft/DTMC  
Super Nintendo - cart - 1-2 Players  
Available Now  
Reviewed by Chris Johnston

If you've known me for the last year, you know that I've gone NUTS over anime. Especially Rumiko Takahashi's Ranma 1/2 series. I have had to pull myself away from buying any more Ranma videos, but now I don't feel as bad, because the animation quality of the new tapes has gone down from what they originally were. Enter Ranma 1/2: Hard Battle for the Super NES.

I was able to pick up this game for a mere five bucks, and boy was it worth it! If you can still find a Kay Bee Toys near you that has this game, I suggest you pick it up. It'll be in the value bin along with all the rest of them.

The fighting aspect of Ranma 1/2 HB isn't really the greatest. But when you realize that this game originally hit Japan around the time when the original Street Fighter II was coming out, then it doesn't look quite as bad. You pick from a stable of the more popular Ranma characters (Mousse, Ranma, Shampoo, Genma, Ryoga, and Akane among them) and duke it out to see who is really king of Furinkan High.

The best aspect of the game is its story. Weird enough to get on anyone's nerves, it's a Ranma fan's dream come true.

Prepare to be KICKED!!

## ONLINE CHAT and how to waste every free minute of your life on it

*by Chris Johnston*

Online chat is one of the most popular features of the internet. Whether you use TALK, ircii, AOL's People Connection, mIRC, ircle, Homer, or WSIRC, talking to other people around the world that share a common interest is addictive and habit-forming. A collection of people just yakking? That, and much more.

This is the story of an Internet Relay Chat channel called #vidgames. Op wars, lamers, system advocacy, it's all just another day on IRC. Started by Marty Chinn (nickname Darknight) and a few others, the channel has flourished from only a few people to now around thirty per night. That includes regular gamers and industry people alike. Join any typical evening, and you'll find at least half of the channel's operators are staff members of Intelligent Gamer, including Jer Horwitz (BlaZphemy), John Ricciardi (John\_R), Peter Bartholow (Peter\_B\_), and Kraig Kujawa (Kraig). Some other regulars to the channel include Andy Cockburn (Enquirer) and Seth Mendelsohn (Yavn).

Chatting about video games is what it's all about. Not just chatting, but also getting the latest industry news, practically instantaneously. When a new system comes out, you get the reaction first. Occasionally there's even some guy boasting that the Jag-

uar is the best system around. If that happens, it's only fair to begin debating the lamer whether or not the Jaguar is 64-bit. Eventually such debates usually lead to somebody getting kicked off the channel, mostly because of a ri-

diculous argument or they begin panicking and looking for any argument available to them to

defend their stance (Game Fan says it's 64-bit so it is!!).

There's even a few home pages dedicated to the channel. Alex Dolski's (<http://Crono95.vidgames.com/~dolski/>) homepage at <http://www.dct.com/~dolski/vidgames> contains profiles of the channel's regulars and not-so regulars. There you can get information about them and the channel in general. Gazunta (<http://www.sv.net.au/~gazunta/>) also has an FAQ set up that will answer your questions about the activity found on the channel and the informal rules that

• CHATTING ABOUT VIDEO GAMES IS WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT. NOT JUST CHATTING, BUT ALSO GETTING THE LATEST INDUSTRY NEWS, PRACTICALLY INSTANTANEOUSLY. •

make up its backbone.

If you've got a UNIX shell account and aren't happy with the long and memory-straining commands of ircii, then I would suggest you pick up one of the many scripts available that will make UNIX IRC a lot easier to use. The most popular of these is PhoEniX, by Vassago. If you don't have a copy of it, it's available at <http://www.azremax.com/phoenix/index.html>. Its many commands will help you get the hang of IRC easily. I've been using PhoEniX for over a year, and it's very helpful. Although if you have a craving to type out long commands, by all means just use the regular UNIX client with no script.

If you're not into the unbridled chat of IRC, and prefer a bit more tame atmosphere, then AOL's many chat rooms are for you. The Video Game discussion area is usually filled with people asking for tips on the newest games, or people "discussing" which system is better. If this is your cup of tea, then go for it. AOL also has special chats with industry insiders and a monthly visit from video game fandom and industry supporter Arnie Katz. I haven't yet attended one of these, but I'm going to be at the next one.

Intelligent Gamer is planning on holding a few industry chats on IRC with industry professionals. They did a few of these last year and they were fairly popular. We'll have to see if they can do it again without their own, unlagged

IRC server. Problems arise on IRC like channel takeovers, where a wily overachiever uses a server split to completely take over the channel and



kick everybody off. When this happens, chat just goes to #vidgames2, so really isn't that big a deal most of the time.

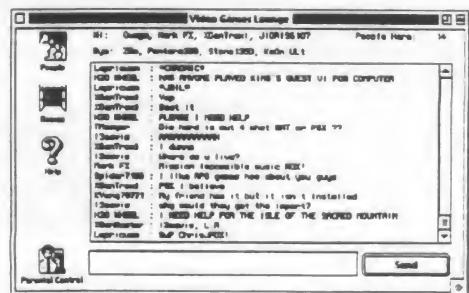
If you're on IRC and can't join #vidgames because it's on invite only, then try out #vidgames2. It's likely that the channel will have moved there temporarily.

Recently there was an op war on the channel, and after much debate, two bots (programs that keep the channel intact even when no one's on) were set up, cPlusPlus and Aware. These bots op only selected operators and keep shitlists of people who are permanently kicked off the channel, usually because of attempted takeovers.

Before you go on, pick a nickname. You'll see me on there as SuperPac, and you should pick a nickname that suits you. For instance, a character in your favorite game, a band you like, character from a TV show, etc. Just make sure that if you coincidentally stole someone else's nickname that you change it to something different. Having two people both named Saturn on the same channel is really confusing!

The first time you join the channel you'll probably be completely lost as to what's going on. Sit back and watch the ongoing conversation for a while, then join when you think you have something to contribute.

If you haven't tried IRC, I encourage you to sign on and try it today. The only thing to watch out for is not to get addicted!



*America Online's Video Games Lounge offers video game chat at a premium cost, and not nearly as lively as IRC.*

Michael Jordan, Michael Jackson, Michael Johnson, Mike Johansen\*

# orbital 32

\* ok, so the first two have nothing to do with Orbital, but it rhymes.

ONLINE ZINES the new age of digital fandom on the world wide web

by Chris Johnston

Print fandom may have slowed down quite a bit from earlier times, but the new age of on-line 'zines has revitalized fandom, and brought it to a much wider audience. Publishing a web 'zine is as easy as getting a crowd of people together, and writing about video games. That's how Intelligent Gamer got started up, evolving from Games Master Journal into a powerhouse stable of writers. Ushering in this new area, you might be interested in taking a look at Orbital (<http://www.arenapub.com/orbital>), a widely known on-line 'zine that anyone who stops by IRC or AOL's Video Games Lounge is familiar with.

Mike Johansen and Mike Johnson are the co-founders of Orbital 32, which began on America On-line last October. "Mike and I had been friends for about a year and we had noticed a severe lack of knowledge on AOL about video games. We wanted to do something about it. So we formed up a sort of 'Intelligent' chat group. After awhile it finally manifested itself into what

it is today," Johansen recalls.

The two have assembled a staff of nine people which divide up writing/webmastering/editing jobs and put together the on-line mag. The look of Orbital is particularly stylish, with the old version having an impressive amount of graphics and logos...not to mention a better use of frames than Next Generation On-line. They're currently going through a complete redesign, which will probably be done sometime in July. Right now, it takes a long amount of time for the page to load up, especially for users accessing it with a 14.4 modem. Nothing a little HTML retooling can fix.

Orbital features news, game reviews, previews, downloadable movies and pictures, and more. It's a little short on opinion columns right now, but then again, most on-line 'zines today are. The current "issue" or update contains three quick pieces, one on Cart Vs. CD, an industry look by Christa Morse, and an editorial on Americanized box art. Recently Orbital ran into a bit of trouble with a staff member when he posted an article that took a very "biting" stance on Intelligent Gamer. The article was put up before anyone else had taken a look at it. Orbital removed the article, kicked the staff member out, and then wrote an apology to IG. The article was basically a rant with no support whatsoever.

"I think it was a situation where we lost control. We apologized to the party the editorial was aimed at. I still think some of them harbor some animosity towards us, and rightfully so," says Johansen. It's my opinion that if there's ani-

mosity between IG and Orbital created because of this article, it should be directed at the author, not the whole staff.

With the distinction of fanzine/magazine greyed somewhat on the Internet, would the editors of Orbital consider it a fanzine or the flashiness of the term "magazine"? Johnson thinks that "We are probably a little more popular than most fanzines because we are on the net, but we are no where near the stature of a prozine." Johansen agrees somewhat but adds "We're not exactly a 'pro mag' (We don't have the budget for that) and we're not really a 'fanzine'. I guess calling us a webzine is fine with me." Even if Johansen uses webzine to describe Orbital, he remains true to one of the cardinal principles of video gaming fandom, "We're not funded by anyone. This is a hobby for us, not a pay check."

No doubt that being on-line increases the potential readership by a lot. According to Johansen, Orbital receives between three and five thousand hits per week. Putting out that number of printed 'zines would cost a fortune! Even if you did do your copying at OfficeMax. Communicating only via e-mail can have its drawbacks though. For months, Johnson was left with-

continued on next page

## Profile:

**Michael Johansen (aka MacrossVF, VirtualOn)**

**Favorite game:** "Virtual On! It is everything I have ever wanted in a game. I grew up watching Robotech when I was a little kid, and I loved the huge mechs fighting it out. So naturally I was blown away when I saw this game. There is nothing better than fighting your friend in a Mech that is 4 stories tall and slicing him in half with a laser sword."

**Systems owned:** 2600, Intellivision, Colecovision, NES, SMS, TG-16, Turbo Duo, Genesis, SFC, SNES, Sega CD, Saturn, and a Playstation.

**Thoughts on 3D revolution in gaming:** "I think the entire 3D genre is being over used. Guardian Heroes is one of my favorite games of all time, and it's a 2D game. Mario 64 is a groundbreaking 3D game, that has loads of fun factor. Crash Bandicoot is a 3D game that breaks NO new ground and is about as fun as kissing a porcupine... A game need not be 3D to be good. I just wish game companies would realize that."



*Orbital's old look is graphic-intensive and takes a while to load, but is impressive stuff. Good use of frames, too.*

## Profile:

**Michael Johnson (aka Vatican)**

**Favorite Game:** "You may find this strange, but Rambo First Blood-Part II for the Sega Master System. It was an overhead style shooter, but the 2-player mode was probably the most fun I have ever had with a game (Battle Mode in Mario Kart comes in at a close second)."

**Systems Owned:** "Going back...Atari 2600, SMS, Genesis, Sega CD, 32X, SNES, Game Gear, Saturn, and PlayStation. I never bought a NES, my next-door neighbor had one and had the money for all the games, so I just hogged his. I plan on getting a N64, don't worry about that."

**Thoughts on 3D Revolution:** "Eventually, it will fill the genre to the point where it can go no further. 2-D lived its course, but is still fun. Virtual Reality will be the next bound after 3-D."

# Black Box Internet

by Jason Whitman

**D**ateline: the late 1990s. The question: how to log on to the Internet. There will be those with multi-thousand dollar PCs who can download, import, and print all in one smooth motion. And there will be those who can look, but not really touch, as they surf what will be the black box Internet, that of cheap, limited terminals meant to save users money. Yet this supposed money-saving revolution may not be a new opportunity for new 'net-heads, but a stranglehold on what they can experience on the web.

The concept of an Internet-only machine seems to me as logical as a Windows Solitaire-only machine: good for a few hours of distraction, but with no practical purpose or opportunities for expansion. Three major players in this new market are Oracle, Tiger Electronics and

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*continued from previous page*

out net access, and couldn't communicate with the rest of Orbital. Orbital has also lost touch with a staff member, Johnson says, "Actually, one member of our staff disappeared. At that time Orbital was still small and the only way we kept in touch was with America On-Line. Shrimp64 if you see this, contact us!"

Before Orbital began, there were already a few gaming webzines up. The two editors say that they tried to create something new and different, but Johansen comments that "The early IGO was a big influence on us though (In a role model sense)..."

What's in the future for Orbital? Johnson says that "Our staff is young compared to the in-print mags, so as we get older and steadily improve maybe you'll see a copy of Orbital sitting on a rack in a video game store." Johansen sees a bigger, better Orbital. "Hopefully we'll see Orbital getting bigger and bigger, getting a larger audience, our own URL, and maybe even a publisher!"

Let's hope as they get bigger they keep with their original ideals. Stop by Orbital and check out one of the best growing on-line 'zines today.

*Orbital Staff\* - Editors: Michael Johansen, Marc Letzmann, Brian Bukanis, Michael Johnson, and Chris Speciale.*

*Contributing Editors: Jason Johnston, Michael Palmer, and Damian Obando.*

*\*staff subject to change*

## BOX-TOP NET logging on for less with dedicated, fully-loaded set-top boxes

Apple Computer, and even the most promising of these new machines seems to be dead in the water, even before its release.

The founder of Oracle said in a recent PBS special on the history of the desktop computer that he "hates the PC." He prefers a system that is completely online, with no paper copies or hard copies of material. Easy to access, easy to view, but seemingly hard to utilize. Granted, a \$200 machine that can view world wide web pages sounds like a commodity, but how many regular users merely browse? The Internet gives desktop publishers the opportunity to download pictures, researchers the resource to print facts and figures, and gamers the contacts to play online games, but will the Oracle machine do such things? Seemingly not, at least not without interfacing with a PC, for such data must be downloaded to disk, imported or exported, and at times printed. You can have an (warning: buzzword, take cover) "information superhighway," but without a machine to download and save this information, and then a way to utilize it in other programs or in printed form, such Internet access seems bland and limited.

The Tiger machine is just as affordable, \$150 for the unit, \$50 for the modem, but recent reports state that the machine will provide "text-only access to the world wide web." Ouch, there's that backwards stepping again. While text access to the web can be useful, especially for researchers and reviewers, there is again a certain limiting aspect to such browsing, as the greatness of many sites is found in their visual appeal. Text-only browsing has no use for publishers or graphic artists, whose work can't be appreciated in such an environment, and the Tiger machine fails to provide any resources to such users. For those of us who have already experienced the web using Netscape, the Tiger machine seems parallel to that Windows Solitaire workstation I mentioned before.

"Hey, our desktop computer line is going down the drain. Let's release a useless machine and give it a cool name like Pippin!" Such seems to be the gameplan of Apple Computer, whose Macintosh computer line is on its last legs, yet it has chosen to take over the reigns of Bandai's (lookout, another buzzword) multimedia machine, the Pippin. While certainly sporting more options and opportunities for expansion than the Tiger and planned Oracle machines, the Pippin too seems to lack the complete Internet package that can be found in a simple PC with a modem. The Pippin can run Netscape, however,

and its included modem even connects at a high rate (14,000 or 28,800 bps), so it certainly can operate as a functional browser. The optional Iomega Zip Drive even provides the medium necessary to download JPEGs and text files to be used in applications on either a PC or a Mac, so the Pippin certainly comes in above its competitors. Accordingly, then, it also costs three times as much, around \$600, which seems absurd, although Apple promises that it can do more, like play games.

Although the Pippin has the potential to be a game machine with its quad-speed CD drive and video game-friendly controller, it can't play Mac games, because it doesn't run the complete Mac OS, even though it comes equipped with the mentioned controller, a keyboard, and a stylus/pad. As a Mac user, I know that video games aren't the Mac's strong suit, so how can they be that of what is essentially just a baby Mac? Apple representatives at the recent E3 show told me that the machine is supposed to fulfill a specific purpose, that of Internet access and "multimedia," a word that has never been successfully defined. From what I saw at the show, the "games" consisted mostly of edutainment titles, which the Mac and PC market have fully covered these days. So although the Pippin brings some great features to the table, its seemingly high price will most likely hold it back, which even Apple seems to know. The same company rep told me at the show that a small number of people will be interested in the Pippin, and as neither a true video game console nor a desktop computer, the machine can be labeled as just another Tandy-type CD device with a high price tag. But it can log on to the Internet!

The truth of the upcoming black box Internet craze seems to be that without all the options and available expansion of a PC, the Internet and world wide web can't be fully explored and used, not to mention that viewing JPEGs and other art on a regular TV is not the most attractive proposition. Regardless, there probably are potential users whose needs meet the limited abilities of these machines, and for them the Oracle, Tiger, or even Apple units may provide cheaper alternatives to PCs. And with Sega's web browser on the horizon and the Sony PlayStation being used for things other than video games even today, this set-top Internet theory seems destined to stay around, even if it does bother some users who have experienced what a true resource the web can be.

continued from page 2

again, as it seems that many of them have moved or just aren't interested in the kinds of things we write about anymore. Here's at least one more issue to keep you busy, and Chris and I have spoken about keeping the 'zine alive during the school year, as difficult as such a proposition has been in the past. If we can't, look for Chris' writing in *Intelligent Gamer* (both the print and online versions), and we'll be sure to send you any future fanzines we may publish.

As for your magazine collection, the problem you're having seems to happen to all avid game players at some time or another, although I certainly would like to have the kind of equipment you do taking up space in my basement. Nevertheless, I've got many boxes of old mags and CES stuff cluttering up my room (er, office, yeah) and closet as well. I'm never sure what to do with them all and what they're worth might be -- collectors' items, firewood, recyclables -- it's hard to say. If you really want to get rid of them, I'd be interested if I had a better idea of what magazines you actually have, so send a list if you get a chance for both myself and other readers. Maybe the "Macheska Magazine Liquidation Sale" can be the first new classified ad in Paradox number 20.)

**Y**o, this is Tim Johnson. I got the issue of Paradox. Quite interesting. In many ways, you have returned to the exact problems and virtues that affected Paradox #1. There is plenty of good information to be had, but there is no real entertainment value. If I wanted to read a lot of stuff about the industry, I probably wouldn't be complaining. But, alas, I don't want to read a lot about the industry.

Was Paradox even that "fun" of a zine in the first place? Was it ever entertaining to read? Yeah, back when there was variety. When I could flip through the pages of Paradox and see more than editorials, it was fine. #18 has so little variety that it hardly held my interest. No, I do not have ADD; no, I am not on prozac. Possibly I just haven't kept up with things in the vg-industry lately and don't care. But I believe that I am correct in saying that part of the charm in the later issues of Paradox is gone.

Seriousness abounds. You guys, for all you say against professionalism in fanzines, have spit out exactly what you proclaim against #18 is drab enough to have the ability to be mistaken for a suit-rag (not something to wipe your clothing with, but rather a magazine for the corporate types). However, if that's what you were striving for, you have succeeded.

The writing is fine (but professional and drab) and the layout is fine (but professional and drab). Were you purposefully trying to create a boring issue, or did you simply not have anything else to put in the issue?

Hell, you even purposefully left out the

# Fan forum

In the middle of everything, there is peace, tranquility and light. If you didn't catch it, this is continued from page two.



**Quotable Quotes.** Shit, that's a sign in itself. Leaving out the main staple of humor that held together all the past issues of Paradox was a bold move.

All in all, looking through the whole zine, it reminds me an awful lot of the kind of boring zines that we used to diss 2 years ago. It reminds me of the zines that I picked up at the CES that bored me to tears, despite the fact that they were well written, produced, laid out, etc. Were you waiting for contributions to add to the variety of the zine? I don't know. I never have been very fond of industry rags.

Paradox #18 isn't about gaming. It's about the BUSINESS of gaming.

**-Tim Johnson**

(CJ -- Good to hear from you again Tim. I look at it this way -- #18 was in many ways like doing #1 all over again. We haven't had an issue in some time, and the biggest thing of all, we've changed. Since our last issue, two years have passed, and we've gotten older, our tastes have changed, and, indeed, our writing styles have changed as well. Jason did the entire production of #18, and he is much more "serious" person than myself. Previous issues were always done collectively, we'd be bouncing ideas off each other all over the place, and with distance, that can't happen like it used to. Surely you must agree that part of the 'zine comes from who is doing it. I hardly think Paradox has turned into the 'zine you make it out to be. Quotable Quotes never "held" the issue together as you seem to think that it did. If the 'zine has changed, it's because we have changed. I prefer to see a cleaner layout than what we used to do on the IIGS. Yes, it's about the business of gaming, but that's what is interesting to me now. I don't know where you've been, but Paradox has always been about the industry from a gamer's perspective. I don't think it's changed at all from that original goal.)

**H**ey guys -- I just got Paradox #18 in the mail. Now I can finally stop holding my breath. Whew!

Well, it's great to see a 'zine after quite some time. SNES Gaming's last issue was No-

vember/December 1995, and I've been in incommunicado with the gaming industry ever since. It's amazing to see how much info and news you miss after just a few months. The first time I heard about DKC3 was when I picked up your ish.

I've pretty much pulled out of gaming all together. Haven't picked up a controller in months, although that'll all change once the N64 comes out. My interests have shifted to computer stuff, including programming and throwing my life away playing Civ2.

I just graduated from high school, and I'll be a Computer Science major at the University of Illinois @ Urbana-Champaign in the fall.

Seeing Paradox really brings back memories of another era. Of subscribing to all the gaming mags, even EGM, and living and breathing the gaming industry. SNES Gaming was an end in and of itself. I'm thinking that in college I'll probably be bored silly with all that C++ and calculus garbage :) so I'm thinking about building a home page devoted to the N64. Let me know what you think.

I'm writing this offline, but as soon as I get on the Internet, I'll be sure to check out your web pages. Any tips about publishing on the web, including what you use (I have Netscape Gold) would be helpful.

Well, as I said, it was good to hear from you again, and I'd like to know how you guys have been -- so just hit that Reply button right now and tell me!

**Rich Wigstone**

**Former SG Editor, Future U.S. President**  
(CJ -- Good to hear from you Rich. I was recently looking through a big stack of 'zines and flipped through some issues of SNES Gaming. Those were the days, eh? It's true that with age you kind of lose interest in the whole video gaming scene. During the school year, I hardly had any contact with gaming, although I picked up issues of Next Generation whenever I could just to keep current. Second semester I tried to keep up with gaming and succeeded. Sounds like you've shifted gears from video gaming to computer gaming. Maybe you'll be programming the games soon. As far as what I use to do web pages, I use a good 'ol text editor and write the HTML out myself. But I view pages using Netscape 3.0 Beta 4. I thought about using a web authoring tool, but ditched that idea. Good luck with your first year of college (it's a trip) and stay in touch!)

**J**ust got the issue today... wow. Although I was a bit saddened by the fact that most of the issue's material was done by Jason, not yourself, what was there by both of you far eclipsed what I have seen in previous Paradoxes.

A huge 'thanks' to you both for the freakin' FANTASTIC review of Above & Beyond... it really means a lot. The E3 report was one of the best I've read... I was glad to hear that the E3 staff had stopped harassing 'kids', as I'll be attending the 1997 show in Atlanta... maybe I'll see you there. You mentioned in the E3 report

about how spectacular a show the Nintendo64 put on... I think the N64 really looks like a new revolution in the industry... I think it'll all come back around to the points in Jason's "The Modern Video Game Evolution"... games will no longer be about graphics or sounds, and much of the excessive violence will be toned down... kids and parents alike will all sit down and play. I suppose this is what "the big N" is thinking as well, as the new slogan "Focused on Fun," says. Also, add the fact that the word 'Nintendo' has always been the generic word for 'video games' by many/most parents ("Why don't you go and play some Nintendo?"). Now, if only NCL hadn't delayed the release for so damn long... I'm thinking that, when the years of 1995/1996 are documented in electronic games history books, it will usually be put that Nintendo just decided to totally skip out on the 32-bit race totally (that was left for Sega and Sony), but were the first to pioneer the 64-bit market.

On the Acclaim/TH\*Q debacle... I agree completely. Acclaim has gone straight downhill since Rise of the Robots, but it seems TH\*Q has improved, if only slightly. I can't say how TH\*Q has improved since the big show since I wasn't present, but you made it sound like they had quite an impressive lineup. If everything you said is true, and TH\*Q pulls them off even halfway decently, TH\*Q may finally get bumped off my list of the Top 3 Worst Game Companies of all time. Of course, the prozines all ignored TH\*Q's, as well as most other non-big-name comps, but that's another story...

Anyway, a GREAT issue of Paradox, I only wish we all could look forward to many

more. It'd be great if you could review a game title or two next issue to give the section a little more variety (instead of letting Jason do them all), but otherwise, a superb job well done. I sincerely hope you all will continue publishing when college again starts up. Of course you couldn't do the the issues with any sort of timeliness, but even a quarterly or bi-annual publication by some of fandom's premium writers would appease me. Keep up the good work, and I can't wait for the next issues of Paradox.

Sincerely,  
Tom Donoho  
A&B

(CJ-- Thanks for the compliments on the issue. Above & Beyond is a fantastic 'zine, Jason and I both agreed it deserved Fanzine of the Month last month hands down. Jason did most of the material mostly because he did the issue and knew how much room was left where. This issue is pretty balanced I think. I don't know, kind of depends on who puts it together. As far as your comments on Nintendo, I agree. I think it's a new era for Nintendo and I think that they're the only company "Focused on Fun." Can't wait for Mario 64, and especially Mario Kart R. I just wish they'd have some more games first. All in good time I suppose. TH\*Q is getting much better, light years ahead of what they used to turn out. Although they're not to the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow yet. You know, we've never really been that reliant on reviews anyway. That's maybe why this issue only has...three. As far as keeping Paradox going during the schoolyear, we're going to try. That's all I can promise you. It may be a while before another issue, I don't know.)

Hey There -- Liked the web site, who's that guy with the glasses? Also, enjoyed new ish o' Paradox, too bad I already read the PDX site beforehand. Still, Eric Frederick was so shocked, he called me up and literally had heart failure! Be sure to check ESCAPADE, I may be writing for them soon as well. (for free, so I'm still officially an amateur) well, that's not true, I did call up TH\*Q and they're sending me an "In the Hunt" Epron, so I guess I am not so pure now. Not that there's anyone who gives a freak anymore, anyhow, anyway. Also: Loved the E3 coverage. I will certainly be in Atlanta in 97 (almost exactly a year from now,...) we should get together and get a brew and shoot the breeze. And I'm not surprised by anything that happens with those illiterate transvestite nazis anymore.

More soon. Mike P.

(CJ-- Good to hear from you Laser Man! One of the big problems with the web site was that all the articles on there were in #18 -- really a dumb move. That won't be happening anymore, as I've semi-given up on the web page, at least during the summer when I could be doing a real print issue. I think I'll resort to putting the articles on after the issue's been out. So, don't look for much on the web page anytime soon. I may be tinkering around with it some more, but there won't be a full on-line version of Paradox in the near future. Good to hear about ESCAPADE, I'd say that qualifies you as going semi-pro. What with Arnie Katz and Russ Ceccola doing ESCAPADE, you're in good company. You? Getting EPROMS? You've sold out! <-- Pat Reynolds talking here. =) See you in Atlanta next year if I end up going.)

Now it's time to say goodbye, once again another issue has passed. Hopefully you enjoyed this little excursion into the realm of gaming fandom. I beg of you to send something in, a Letter of Comment, a contribution, anything you can muster. I'm not asking that you do it for me...do it for the GOOMBA! Have mercy on his soul! \*ahem\* O.K., now that that's done -- there are a couple of ways you can help to keep Paradox going. One is by sending us something to print for #20 (our twentieth issue! Woo-wool!). The other is to help spread this 'zine around. If there's a friend of yours who didn't get a copy who wants one, I encourage you to make a copy on a local xerox machine. The machines are quite friendly, they won't bite, unless of course you provoke them. If there's an article you like, feel free to copy the page and give it to co-workers.

BUT, if you're going to reprint the issue, you can't take our articles and reformat them to your own greedy little specs. I saw that! That's what you were going to do, wasn't it! You two-

# END this MADNESS

bit gaming publisher you! You think you're pretty smart, don't you. Taking other people's work and printing it in your own rag. You make me SICK! Oh, did I say that out loud?

If you happen to be a kind soul, and you've been receiving Paradox for a while, you might take it upon your heart to make a small donation. This issue cost us quite a bit of money, and it would be ever so nice if you would just give us something...anything...two nickels to rub together please I beg of YOU!!! If you're bored

at work someday in the near future, and feel like shooting the breeze about the industry, and we have gotten into your hands via someone else, drop us a line or give us a call! I remember days where this guy would call from Renovation and say how he picked up an issue of Paradox from an old wisecracking chap with a wooden leg. Oh, soory, I must 'ave slipped into me English accent there for a fortnight.

Send us e-mail, snail mail, etc. If you see either one of us on AOL (Screen Names ChrisJPDX and J Whitman1, respectively) give a shout out. We know you're out there...lurking...planning your devlish schemes to take over the industry. No fair! We were there first!

This is all I'm gonna say for right now, but I'll leave you with this:

## KEEP THE ISSUES CIRCULATING

thank you for your time

ANSWER TO Necro Fan Quiz 1: Project Reality, 2: Super Doctor Kage, 3: Resistance of Gungnir of Cygnus, 4: High End 5: Purple Puffinwing, 6: Dark Hollows, 7: Star Voyager, 8: Final Fantasy, 9: Heaven's Hand, 10: Kirby's Avalanche and Dr. Robotnik's Mean Machine, 11: "Mutants", or Playing Cards, 12: Hyrule.

# Mario for President!

**R**ecently Nintendo of America, Inc. announced that their beloved and jovial plumber mascot of more than a decade has announced his candidacy for President of the United States. I was honored to have the first phone conversation with the candidate, and what follows is our conversation about why (in the world) he would ever think about running for President. Surprisingly, he kept very calm with no trace of his Italian speech patterns during the interview. It made me wonder if this was not just an elaborate scheme by Nintendo corporate elite to take over the country and run the competition out of town.

**PDX: Why, at this late time in the year and the elections just a few months away, would you want to run for President?**

M: "The way I look at it is that I already have the name recognition needed to be President. Moreso than say, Dole or Clinton. Why, in surveys I'm more popular than Mickey Mouse. And a mouse can't be President, now can he?"

**PDX: No, I suppose he can't. What about getting your message out to the people. How do you expect to achieve that?**

M: "In the first dual-purpose advertising campaign, Nintendo is funding my commercials, which double as Nintendo 64 promotions. With all the money Nintendo is spending on advertising before November, I think I've got it covered." [LAUGHS]

**PDX: You're not the first video game character to run for President. In the 1992 campaign, one of your rivals, Bonk, also decided to try to make a bid at the Presidency. How do you think you'll compare to the mediocre showing on Bonk's bid?**

M: That Bonk guy went in to it head first, if

you'll excuse the pun. But he didn't have the kind of tact like I do. See this plunger?"

**PDX: Yes.**

M: "It's my running mate. I call him 'Colonel Plunger'. What do you think of that you sorry little press boy?"

**PDX: What happened to Luigi? I would think that you would want your own brother and faithful companion for many years to be with you in your moment of triumph, right?**

M: "Luigi's finished. Washed out. Ever since he tried to marry that Julia Roberts chick, he just hasn't been the same old guy in the green overalls that he used to be. So selfish. 'Mario, why can't I have my own game,' or 'Mario, how come Nintendo gives you more money,' or 'Why'd you hit me over the head with Colonel Plunger?' The guy was just getting on my nerves. I gave him a big break in that Mario 2 game of mine in the U.S. Give him an inch and he takes a mile."

**PDX: Sorry to hear about that. Let's turn to the issues now. What is your stance on America's agriculture policy. It's been a poor year for farmers—**

M: "The answer is as simple as one crop: Mushrooms. They will feed the world and give everybody an extra life. Plus those nutty vegetarians will stop complaining. You know I'm a vegetarian myself."

**PDX: I didn't know that sir. What about the deficit, what do you plan to do to reduce it. Republicans are calling for a Constitutional Amendment to balance the budget.**

M: "Well, here's my plan. I think it's pretty smart. [COY LAUGH] See, what I'll do is run around the Mushroom Kingdom and collect coins, see... and then after every level I complete as President, the deficit will go down more. Man, you should see that King Koopa. He's loaded with

money! And he drops it all over his domain too. Messy evildoer...reminds me a lot of Bob Dole." [LAUGHS]

**PDX: What about defense spending?**

M: "The way I look at defense spending is this, and I think you're going to like it: we'll grow fire flowers and then have our soldiers eat those. Can't go wrong with that! Plus my new army uniforms are made of a stylish material. Red overalls and a blue shirt, capes for the Air Force. What do you think of that, eh?"

**PDX: I suppose that's all right. What about unemployment?**

M: "Well, there's a simple and easy solution to that. I'll put American workers to work on saving my Princess. When they complete that, we are in desperate need of go kart drivers for my next project, the new Mario Kart game. After I win in November, you'll be seeing more of me at Shosinkai."

**PDX: Is this whole Presidency thing just a ploy to sell Nintendo's new console?**

M: "Erm...no, no it's not. Whatever made you think that?" [STIFLES A LAUGH]

**PDX: I don't think this is the real Mario, you don't even have an Italian accent!**

M: "Oh my, Mama Mia! My pasta is-a burnin' on the stove. I have to go and-a check it!"

**PDX: Is this Howard Lincoln? Are you delusional?**

M: "Ummmm... no, why would I be—"

**PDX: This is his extension you know... What kind of ploy is this?**

M: "Gotta go, can't talk right now, gotta go, vote Mario '96"

[CLICK - HANGS UP]

Well, vote Mario for President in '96. No more gridlock. Because, well... he'll plunge it.

---

## PARADOX

316 E. 11th Ave.  
Naperville, IL 60563-2708

You pick up the 3DO and prepare to throw it, but it just crumbles in to a pile of dust. Seems it wasn't made with the best material! Of course the Smurfs are on top of you in seconds and the last thing you see is blue and white.

## Our FAVES

You run frantically back down the stairs only to slam head first in to the leader of the pack, who instructs the 20,000 Smurfs standing behind him to kill you. Needless to say you are dead in seconds.

### GR

#### ~ Games ~

- 1 ~ **Rock and Roll Racing** - FUN FUN FUN!!!  
GAME O' DA YEAR!!! BEST MUSIC!!!  
BEST SOUND!!! IT KILLS!!!
- 2 ~ **Clay Fighter** - More FUN FUN FUN!!!  
Absolutely HILARIOUS!!!
- 3 ~ **Aladdin** - Another incredibly fun and easy game but since it's so short don't expect it to stay long!
- 4 ~ **Wolf 3D** - I LOVE WALKING THROUGH WALLS!!! AH HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!
- 5 ~ **Scorched Earth** - Great lil' IBM game!
- 6 ~ **The 7th Guest** - An amazing experience and a great story.
- 7 ~ **Flash Back** - Fantastic control, great graphics, and an awesome story!
- 8 ~ **Cool Spot** - Action platform o' da year!
- 9 ~ **SF II Turbo** - SF II has slipped down a bit, but don't be surprised if it makes a come back!

10 ~ **NBA Jam** - Can't wait for the SNES version!  
This WHOLE list will be completely different next month. Just watch.....

#### ~ Movies ~

- 1 ~ **Search for the Holy Grail** - HAHAHAHAHA HAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHAHA!!!
- 2 ~ **Raising Arizona** - PERFECT!!!
- 3 ~ **Jurassic Park** - I LOVE dinosaurs!
- 4 ~ **UHF** - I LOVE WEIRD AL!!!
- 5 ~ **Star Wars** - SPECTACULAR!!!

These will NEVER change. Just watch.....

#### ~ Fanzines ~

- 1 ~ **Video Apocalypse** - MJ's style and humor can't be beat!
- 2 ~ **GEA** - One of the best with TONS of people from all around fandom!
- 3 ~ **Paradox** - Chris and Company keep pumping out those great issues
- 4 ~ **Spectrum** - UNIX, ah hahahahahahahahaha!!!
- 5 ~ **High Density** - INCREDIBLY well done!

#### ~ Prozines ~

- 1 ~ **EGM** - The Biggest and Best!
- 2 ~ **Game Fan** - Amazing pix!

### JL

#### ~ Games ~

- 1 ~ **Rock and Roll Racing** - 100% fresh Game of the Year!
- 2 ~ **Clay Fighter** - EAT me BLOB! No, I didn't mean that literally.
- 3 ~ **The 7th Guest** - This has a wonderful story line and the best graphics I've ever seen along side best 3D graphics!
- 4 ~ **Aladdin** - Wonderful game but is too easy and short.
- 5 ~ **NBA Jam** - Wooo Jams it in. Excellent game.
- 6 ~ **Wolf 3D** - The best cheat in the Universe.
- 7 ~ **Flash Back** - Superb control and Graphics!
- 8 ~ **SF II Turbo** - I've gotten tired of it but it holds.
- 9 ~ **Battle Toads** - Geeze this game is fun until the 3rd stage.
- 10 ~ **Day of the Tentacle** - Wonderful game and story.

#### ~ Movies ~

- 1 ~ **Jurassic Park** - The Digital Experience!
- 2 ~ **Search for the Holy Grail** - Burn the witch!!
- 3 ~ **Space Balls** - It's Space Ball 1, they've gone to plad!!
- 4 ~ **Star Trek 6** - "I have never trusted Klingons, and I never will for the death of my son."
- 5 ~ **Star Wars** - Imperial Star destroyers could easily take on the Rebels but no, they are too Stupid!

#### ~ Fanzines ~

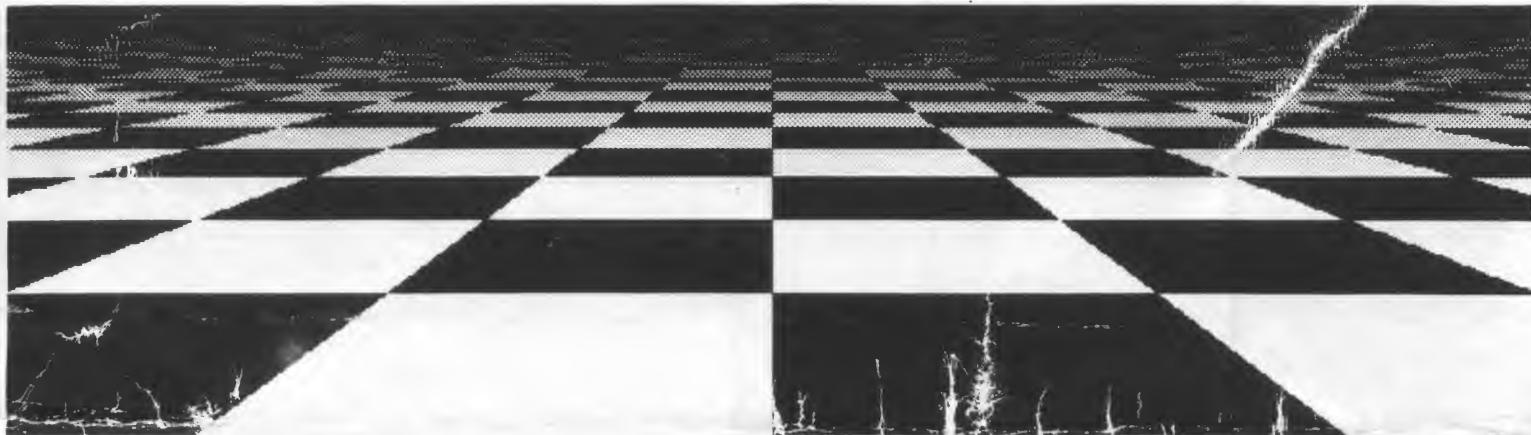
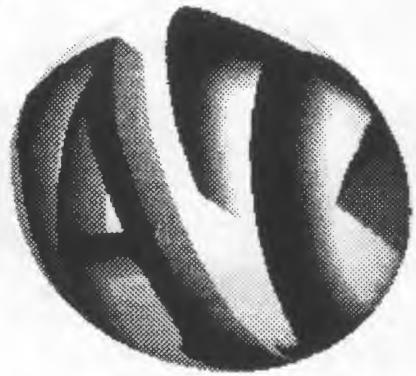
- 1 ~ **Video Apocalypse** - Thanks for the review MJ!
- 2 ~ **High Density** - SUPER Dupper fanzine!
- 3 ~ **Spectrum** - WOW! how does he do it?
- 4 ~ **IBTL** - What a lovely fanzine!!!
- 5 ~ **Paradox** - Sweet fanzine! I love it!!

#### ~ Prozines ~

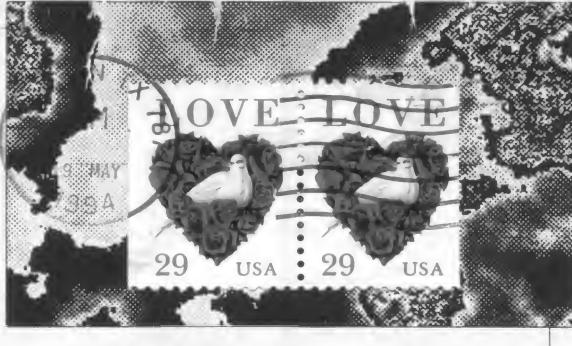
- 1 ~ **Egm** - I hate this zine but it's the best, and I do mean Egm!
- 2 ~ **Game Fan** - This zine is not good to, but still is the second best.

Access Time # 2 - XY ~ 2UMCE ~ 15

Well, here it is,  
The Better Late than Never edition  
**ACCESS TIME #2**



**ACCESS TIME**  
701 PATTERSON AVE.  
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